

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1449

INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

UNCLAS BUENOS AIRES 3909

FOR HERMAN KEINE-AA/LA; JOHN BREEN/CHARLES STOCKMAN/STANLEY
APPLEGATE/JAMES SMITH - LA/DR; WAYNE TATE - LA/DP

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: PHASE-OUT OF RTAC/BUENOS AIRES & PROVISIONS FOR
MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL ACTIVITIES

1. BERG NOW IN BUENOS AIRES FOLLOWING UP ON PLANNING EXERCISE RTAC PHASE-OUT CARRIED OUT BY L.A. BUREAU TEAM IN MEXICO. PLAN PRESENTED HEREIN IS IN KEEPING WITH SPIRIT OF TEAM REPORT AND BERG'S TALK WITH KLEINE DURING MAY VISIT. IT HAS BEEN GONE OVER THOROUGHLY WITH AND CONCURRED IN BY CHARGE MONTLLOR, AND OTHER EMBASSY OFFICIALS WHO SHARE BERG'S CONCERN THAT THE PHASE-OUT PROCEED IN ORDERLY FASHION AND THAT ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS BE ADQUATELY STAFFED AND SUPERVISED. FOR REASONS STATED BELOW, THE TIME FRAME PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED FOR PHASE-OUT RTAC/BUENOS AIRES, HAS PROVED UNREALISTIC.

2. RTAC/BA PIPELINE OF UNDELIVERED BOOK TITLES: AS OF THIS DATE, THERE ARE CONTRACTS TALLING \$300,000 FOR 48 TITLES STILL UNDELIVERED. THIS SLIPPAGE HAS BEEN CAUSED BY SHORTAGE OF PAPER, LABOR DIFFICULTIES AND THE OFFICIAL OVER-VALUATION OF THE ARGENTINE PESO REALISTIC PROJECTION OF DELIVERY LAST TITLES IS DECEMBER 1975. THEREFORE ESSENTIAL THAT LOCAL PRODUCTION STAFFER DAVID WALDHUTER REMAIN ON BOARD UNTIL DECEMBER 31.

3. ADVICE - OF CHARGE PROCUREMENT OF ARGENTINE BOOKS
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FOR THE MISSIONS: PROVISION HAS BEEN MADE IN THE APPROVED PHASE-OUT PLAN FOR RTAC/MEXICO TO CONTINUE ADVICE-OF-CHARGE PROCUREMENT OF MEXICAN BOOKS FOR THE MISSIONS. IT MAKES GOOD SENSE TO CONTINUE THE MISSIONS' ACCESS TO ARGENTINE BOOKS BY THE RETENTION OF EXPERIENCED LOCAL STAFFER BLANCA VOLLENWEIDER TO HANDLE ADVICE-OF-CHARGE PROCUREMENT THROUGH FY-1977. F.Y. 1975 LEVEL WAS \$30,000 AND IS EXPECTED TO INCREASE AS QUANTITY OF "FREE" RTAC BOOKS PROVIDED MISSIONS UNDER "SYSTEMATIC DISTRIBUTION" DECLINES.

4. DISTRIBUTION OF RTAC BOOKS IN ARGENTINA: CHARGE MONTLLOR AND BERG AGREE THAT IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE TO CONTINUE DISTRIBUTION OF RTAC BOOKS TO ARGENTINE INSTITUTIONS UNTIL THE ENTIRE PIPELINE (RTAC MEXICO PRODUCTION INCLUDED) IS EXHAUSTED AROUND DEC. 31, 1976. THE COST WOULD BE MINIMAL -- ONE CONTRACT SHIPPING CLERK -- EDUARDO PIAZZA -- AND LOCAL POSTAGE.

5. AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REACHED FOR ALL OF THE AFOREMENTIONED RESIDUALS TO BE CARRIED OUT, ON DWAYNE ROGERS' DEPARTURE, UNDER THE DIRECT SUPERVISION OF MS. VOLLENWEIDER (A VERY CAPABLE & EXPERIENCED LOCAL) AND THE GENERAL SUPERVISION OF THE EMBASSY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER. IT IS ALSO PLANNED THAT MS. VOLLENWEIDER WOULD HANDLE ALL AID ACCOUNTING RESIDUALS, THUS PERMITTING THE TERMINATION OF PRESENT LOCAL ACCOUNTING CLERK.

6. FOREGOING ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED WITH CONTROLLER, USAID/URUGUAY, IN CONNECTION WITH BUDGET SUBMISSION NOW IN PREPARATION.

7. PARAMOUNT CONSIDERATION IS ROGERS' PLACEMENT. IF, HOWEVER, THERE IS FLEXIBILITY IN TIMING OF NEXT ASSIGNMENT, HIS CONTINUATION FOR THREE OR FOUR MONTHS LONGER WOULD ASSURE KNOWLEDGEABLE STEWARDSHIP FOR OUTSTANDING BOOK CONTRACTS AND SOMEONE TO OVERSEE MYRIAD PHASE-OUT DETAILS THAT SHOULD BE TAKEN CARE OF BEFORE TRANSFER OF RESIDUALS TO ALREADY OVERBURDENED EMBASSY STAFF.
MONTLLOR

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